



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

Regulatory Division  
200900561

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**SAVANNAH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS**  
1104 North Westover BLVD, Unit 9  
ALBANY, GEORGIA 31707

27 MAY 2009

**JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**Savannah District/State of Georgia**

The Savannah District has received an application for a Department of the Army Permit, pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344), as follows:

Application Number: 200900561

Applicant: Colonel Thomas Macdonald, Garrison Commander  
Fort Benning, Georgia 31905

Location of Proposed Work: The project site lies on the east side of 10<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Road, just north of its intersection with Midwest Road (Figures 1-3). GPS coordinates of this site is Latitude 32.523405 N and Longitude 84.821502 W. This site is approximately 39.2 acres in size and the amount of disturbed area will be approximately 35.7 acres.

Description of Work Subject to the Jurisdiction of the US Army Corps of Engineers: This proposed project would impact 4.27 acres of wetland for the construction of a Modified Record Fire (MRF) Range (65049). Primary facilities include the MRF range, general instruction building, ammunition breakdown building, bleacher enclosure, range operations center, range operations and storage building, latrine, covered mess, and building information systems. Supporting facilities include electric service, site utilities, and information systems.

**Mitigation Plan**

Fort Benning is proposing to mitigate these impacts by purchasing 32.45 wetland credits from the Kolomoki Mitigation Bank.

**BACKGROUND**

This Joint Public Notice announces a request for authorizations from both the US Army Corps of Engineers and the State of Georgia. The applicant's proposed work may also require local governmental approval.

## STATE OF GEORGIA

Water Quality Certification: The Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division, intends to certify this project at the end of 30 days in accordance with the provisions of Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, which is required by an applicant for a Federal Permit to conduct an activity in, on, or adjacent to the waters of the State of Georgia. Copies of the application and supporting documents relative to a specific application will be available for review and copying at the office of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division, Water Protection Branch, 4220 International Parkway, Suite 101, Atlanta, Georgia 30354, during regular office hours. A copier machine is available for public use at a charge of 25 cents per page. Any person who desires to comment, object, or request a public hearing relative to State Water Quality Certification must do so within 30 days of the State's receipt of application in writing and state the reasons or basis of objections or request for a hearing. The application can also be seen in the Savannah District US Army Corps of Engineers, Albany Field Office, 1104 N. Westover Blvd, Unit 9, Albany, Georgia.

## US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

The Savannah District must consider the purpose and the impacts of the applicant's proposed work, prior to a decision on issuance of a Department of the Army Permit.

Cultural Resources Assessment: The US Army Infantry Center, Fort Benning is the lead federal agency for this proposed action. Historic and Cultural Resources Surveys and Assessments were included in an MCOE EIS that is currently being performed by Fort Benning. As soon as the assessments are completed, a copy of the results will be forwarded to the appropriate offices for review. Fort Benning will meet all lead federal agency responsibilities pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, prior to any work occurring in waters of the US subject to the jurisdiction of the USACE.

Endangered Species: The US Army Infantry Center, Fort Benning is the lead federal agency for this proposed action. Threatened and Endangered Species Assessments were included in an MCOE EIS that is currently being performed by Fort Benning. As soon as the surveys and assessments are completed, a copy of the results will be forwarded to the appropriate offices for review. Fort Benning will meet all lead federal agency responsibilities pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, prior to any work occurring in waters of the US subject to the jurisdiction of the USACE.

Public Interest Review: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation,



shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership and in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

Consideration of Public Comments: The US Army Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Native American Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the US Army Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Application of Section 404(b) (1) Guidelines: Project Purpose and need: This project is required to provide modern targetry and feed back in support of testing and training soldiers. It will qualify them with the skills necessary to identify, engage, and defeat stationary infantry targets in day/night operations using the M16A and M4 rifles. The capability of a Modified Record Fire range to support both familiarization and qualification training will greatly enhance scheduling flexibility and training quality. If this project is not provided, adequate range firing points will not be available to support increased gunnery need on Fort Benning. Soldier small arms skill will not be trained to Army standards.

Alternative Site Evaluation: With regard to the project site location, Fort Benning is limited in spaces that can accommodate a training area of this size. A search was conducted for alternative sites and only one available site was found that could accommodate this project. Because of the layout and size of the existing training area site, it allowed for the requirements of the proposed Modified Record Fire Training Area, with the least overall impacts to jurisdictional areas. This area provided the best and only option for this training facility. Therefore, no other more feasible alternative sites exist on this military installation for this project.

Avoidance and Minimization: This project site has a wetland area that extends through the middle of the proposed project area. During the design process, the foot print of the project was adjusted and reduced to avoid wetland impacts. Approximately 2 acres of wetlands were avoided.

Public Hearing: Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application for a Department of the Army Permit. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for requesting a public hearing. The decision whether to hold a public hearing is at the discretion of the District Engineer, or his designated appointee, based on the need for additional substantial information necessary in evaluating the proposed project.

Comment Period: Anyone wishing to comment on this application for a Department of the Army Permit should submit comments in writing to the Commander, US Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District, Albany Field Office, 1104 N. Westover Blvd, Unit 9, Albany, Georgia. 31707, no later than 30 days from the date of this notice. Please refer to the applicant's name and the application number in your comments.

If you have any further questions concerning this matter, please contact Thomas Fischer, at (229) 430-8566.

Enclosures











